OUR EDUCATIONAL PAGE.

Devoted to the Interests of the Schools, Teachers and Children of Virginia.

Improvement League in Augusta County

WORK OF BEVERLEY MANOR LEAGUE.

School Improvement Leagues have been at work in Augusta county long enough now to judge somewhat as to their usefulness, at least in districts where they have been at all active. If they are helpful the fact should be emphasized, leagues multiplied, and brought more closely in touch with teachers and patrons. In five of the six school districts in the county leagues were organized, and are, more or less, alive. A statement of what they have done in the several districts would not be without interest. The writer takes the liberty of saying something about the league in his district, the only one that has come under his observation.

The Beverley Manor Improvement League, organized last summer with Mrs. W. W. King, president; Miss E. Bateman, vice-president, and Mrs. L. C. Wise, secretary. These, with Misses M. P. Duval, Martha Riddle, Annie Tate, M. Fallon and L. Bryan are the board of managers. It will appear at once from these names that the league was most fortunate in being in charge of women of such eminent ability, culture and experience. A district is, indeed, happily situated that can command the services of women like these.

The trustees soon learned that the league had come into being. They came with questions; wanted to know the location of every school house; the name and address of each teacher, etc. There were many interviews, and, of course, it took some of the trustees' time, and the time of the ladies, but it was all pleasant, at least to the trustees, and certainly the time was not wasted.

TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

When the teachers met with the school board to sign contracts the officers of the league took advantage of the occasion to be present, and explain the purposes of the league in order to avoid any possible want of harmony between the league and the teachers and trustees and to secure their co-operation. At this conference it was agreed to have a teachers' meeting monthly. Miss Martha Riddle, of the Mary Baldwin Seminary faculty, consented to take charge of the meetings and presided over them throughout the term. Teachers who attended regularly are enthusiastic in praise of Miss Riddle, and the meetings. The attendance, however, was not as good as it should have been, although the day selected for the meetings was most convenient for the teachers, it being their monthly pay-day, when the teachers went to Staunton, the place of meeting, to take their reports and draw their salaries. Some, no doubt, had good reasons for not attending. But it is sadly true that some, so-called, teachers (they do not really teach), seem entirely lacking in an ambition to succeed, and make no effort to improe themselves.

PATRONS' RALLY-DAY.

Friday of the first week in the session was set for "Patrons' Rally-day." The opening day would have been chosen, but it was thought better to wait until teachers could send notices through the neighborhood. A committee of two leaguers visited each school, and in order that they might do so, the time for the rally was 10 A. M. in half of the schools and 2 P. M. in the others. This enabled the committee attending one meeting in the morning to be present at another in the afternoon. In this way the league succeeded in having representatives at each of the twenty school houses for white children in the district, and interesting addresses were made. The attendance of patrons was gratifying at some schools, and disappointing at others. At "Penrose" the writer was astonished to find every male patron of the school present. They were not so many in number, but it was good to see even a half dozen, or so, thrifty farmers leave their work for the "rally" just to show they were interested in their little school. On the whole, and considering that it was the first time anything of the sort was ever tried in the county, it was a great success. It should be made much of until "Patrons' Rally-day" is firmly established as an institution of the people.

A FEW OTHER THINGS.

The district board furnished teachers printed cards of invitation to be distributed monthly for patrons, mothers especially, to be present on the last Friday afternoon in each month from 2 to 4, at which time there is a review and blackboard exercises. Patrons like this. Many magazines and some good books were distributed.

The Beverley Manor League has done well. Many did their parts excellently. Nevertheless, to the president, Mrs. W. W. King, more than to any other person, or influence, is due the success of the organization. Having taken hold of the work she faithfully stood by it through discouragements that would have caused one less determined of purpose to resign before the term was half over. The league would find it difficult to fill her place.

JOHN W. TODD.

Staunton, Va.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS BEST FOR RURAL DISTRICTS

For a number of years I have had occasion to observe education through the means of public and private schools. Having been educated by both means, I think I know whereof I speak. While there are special advantages derived from both sources, if education is to reach that stage of perfection that we all hope to see, it must come through public instrumentality, and not by private efforts.

The following remarks apply principally to education in rural districts, as most persons in the city recognize these facts. We will first look at education from a private standpoint, and must admit that a great advantage accrues to the pupil by individual training with the proper instructor, but "thereby hangs a tale." But a few teachers who have thoroughly prepared themselves can afford to teach for salaries generally paid in private families. How rarely do we hear of graduates of our State normal schools or other recognized institutions of learning teaching in private families, and why should they? For qualified teachers are greatly in demand in the public schools, and at greatly advanced prices. The teacher's work is also lighter, as she does not have to keep study-hour and to be constantly supervising the children.

One-fourth the money expended for a private teacher would be sufficient to educate the same children by public means. In the first place, from what source do we procure our private teachers? Generally in answer to some newspaper advertisement. These applicants are a class of individuals, in a great number of instances, who are unable even to secure a third-grade certificate in the public school examinations. They come recommended by their pastor and their doctor, with but little said or their literary attainments. They have attended no recognized institution of learning or met any other requirements of proficiency which would be necessary to teach in a public school, else they would not be securing positions through this medium. As a rule, they change their positions each year. The children receive a different course of instruction thereby.

My personal observation of teachers in private families is that not one-half of them are qualified for the duties they undertake. The parents of a great number of these children are not capable of judging who is the proper person to train their children. They, themselves, are often illiterate. To the above I will admit there are exceptions. Now, on the other hand, we will look at public education. A system that has stood the test of over a quarter of a century. At first ridiculed and severely criticised, it has steadily grown in usefulness and favor until it is now recognized as the sword of defence for the nation, and is only imperfect and deficient where the people themselves have not become interested enough to supply the means to perfect this great work.

From whence do our teachers come for this system. From the State Female Normal School, William and Mary College, and other recognized institutions of learning in ours and other States. Not being a graduate of these institutions, it is required to stand an examination, and to secure some grade of certificate before they are allowed to teach in the public schools. The work of each teacher is supervised by the division superintendent, district school board and the general public. I do not mention the University of Virginia and several other State institutions, for but a few of these men ever teach in our public schools, but take up the sciences or a profession. The system is, or should be, a continuous line of thought and study from the beginning in the primary school to the ending in the High School. Children are avoided that setback which comes from the frequent change in mode of teaching introduced by private instructors.

In Lynchburg, a city of great wealth, where the public system has reached the highest state of perfection, the public schools are more universally patronized. I was told during the co-operative meeting in that city last fall that very few children were in private schools, except those unable to keep up with their classes in the public schools.

While the faculty for imparting instruction is in a measure innate, knowledge is not so, and must be acquired by association and study with those who have given their time and efforts in securing it. As public school teachers are expected, the salary paid them should be sufficient to require them each year to take a course at one of the State Normals, thereby increasing their efficiency for the work.

Some of the reasons that so few children in the rural districts attend public schools are, first the lack of appreciation by the parents themselves, and those who do appreciate education falsely conceive that it can be best obtained by private means. In a number of instances I must admit that the public schools have been used as a pension system for old soldiers, and poor girls who have had little opportunities for obtaining an education.

This condition of affairs has produced an idea that the schools are run for the benefit of the teacher alone. With this kind of public sentiment, it is hard to get regular attendance, even though the teacher be capable. For the slightest cause parents withdraw their children from school, thinking thereby they can injure the teacher by reducing her average.

This leads me to suggest in conclusion that compulsory education, under certain conditions and restrictions, must sooner or later be instituted to render the school system a more complete one.

T. WELCH DEW.

What Is Doing At Trinity College

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

TRINITY COLLEGE, DURHAM, N. C., March 31.—The April number of the Archive contains the following interesting table of contents: Some Unpublished Letters of Nathaniel Macon, edited by Dr. J. S. Bassett; The Mysterious Box, by W. S. Lockhart; Marse Jack (poem); The Salvation of Edward Thurman, by Stephen J. Stephens; The Goal of Society, by Hoy Taylor; No Letting Down (poem), by Katherine Herring; Gustav Freesgn's Joen Uhl, by Eliza Richards Brown; The Girls (poem), by F. W. Obarr; To Emma (poem), translated from German of Schiller.

Messrs. S. B. Underwood and C. E. Phillips have returned from Charleston, S. C., where they have been attending the third annual Interstate Y. M. C. A. Convention of the Carolinas. Mr. Phillips went as a representative of the local branch of the Y. M. C. A., and Mr. Underwood went to fill the position of secretary of the convention, having been called to this office last week by Mr. G. C. Huntington, interstate secretary. They report a very successful convention and an enjoyable trip.

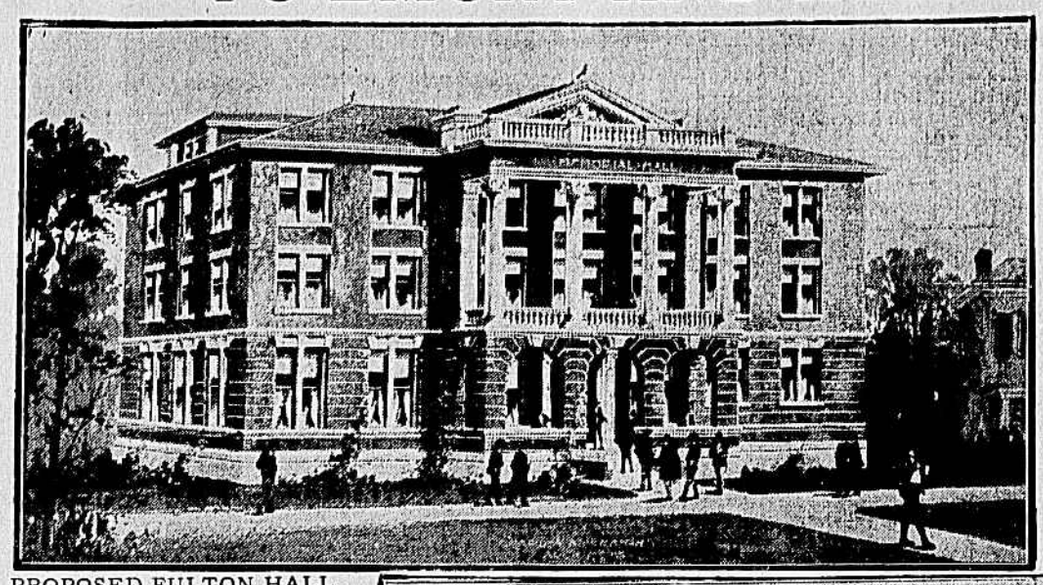
Wednesday night Professor Atwell C. McIntosh, of the Law Department, spoke to the Y. M. C. A. in the association hall. The Wednesday evening meeting under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. are exceedingly well attended.

The next lecture on the series of faculty lectures will be delivered by Dr. J. J. Wolf, of the departmnet of biology. His subject will be "Some Glimpses of Bacteria."

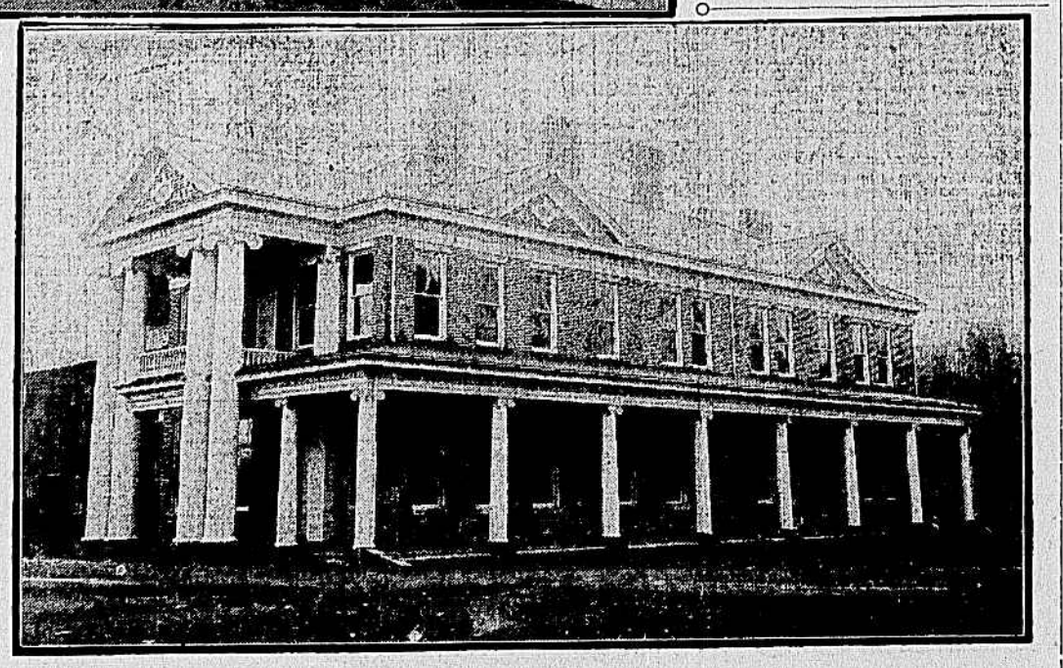
There has been great interest in basket-ball during the last few days. A series of three games has been played between the college and Trinity Park School. After the first two games there was a tie, and in the deciding contest the college won.

A brass band has been organized among the students, with the following officers: Mr. W. M. Crook, captain; Mr. G. Koerner, secretary and treasurer, and Mr. J. L. Williams, drum major of the band. It will consist in all of fourteen pieces, as follows: W. M. Crook, W. M. Wells, G. M. Daniels, D. B. Curley and W. M. Nelson, cornets; Z. A. Rochelle and E. A. Seeman, clarinets; J. G. Gillespie, trombone; T. R. Stockard and B. W. Hawks, first and second alto, respectively; D. M. Albright, baritone; P. Pickard, tuba; J. R. McPhail, snare drum, and G. Koerner, bass drum.

MAKING FINE ADDITIONS TO EMORY AND HENRY



PROPOSED FULTON HALL.



STUDENTS' HOME.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

EMORY AND HENRY COLLEGE, EMORY, VA., March 31.—Thirteen years ago Dr. R. G. Waterhouse became president of Emory and Henry College. At this time a debt of $11,000 hung over the institution. To-day the debt is practically liquidated. Besides the payment of the debt during the presidency of Dr. Waterhouse, two full professors and one assistant have been added to the faculty. The number of students has increased each year, and the enrollment during the present session is the largest for over thirty years. Also, a handsome new building, the Students' Home, has been built. The home was built by the ladies of the community, who are organized as the Home Makers' Bank. These are some of the improvements that have ben made during the incumbency of the present president, but there are other improvements that will have to be made if the alma mater of Robert Bridgeway, General J. E. B. Stuart, General Horatio C. King, Bishop E. E. Hass, Hon. John Goode, Judge John A. Buchanan, and a host of others, is to continue in the successful work that has made its past famous. The main college building has served its day, and must be replaced by a new and modern structure. The time demands a new gymnasium, and many more improvements are necessary.

Already the work has begun. For over a year Rev. J. R. Hunter has been financial agent fo rthe college, and many plans have been inaugurated, the consumation of which will make the eqipment of Emory and Henry abreast with the very best and behind none.

During the coming summer a new fitting school building will be erected. It will be named Fulton Hall in honor of Rev. Creed Fulton, the founder of the college. It wil cost about 15,000 dollars. The erection of the building is absolutely necessary because of the growing number of boys who are entering the preparatory department. The building will be on the site of the present preparatory house, and will be furnished with all modern conveniences.

The erection of Fulton Hall will be followed as soon as possible by the main colege building. This will be built by the old students of the college and will be known as Alumni Hall. The estimated cost is 50,000 dollars.

All the campus buildings are to be heated from a central heating plant, and will be lighted by acetylene gas. The water will be brought from neighboring springs to a reservoir on an adjoining hill.

With the growing necessity for more suitable and modern buildings for Emory and Henry, may be noted the growth of the college community. It is a fact often remarked upon by visitors. A few years ago the homes of members of the faculty, the store and postoffice made up the town of Emory. It has been the policy of the college recently to sell lots off the college farm to suitable persons who will erect good houses. As a result several handsome residences have been added, and the prospects are fair for many more. The healthfulness of the climate and the beauty of the place is not surpassed in Virginia.

The State Normal has been conducted here for the past three summers, and will again be held here during the coming summer. The prospects are that it will be permanently established.

From the statement of these facts as to the present condition of Emory and Henry College, one must conclude that the outlook is bright. But before the contemplated improvements can be made more money must be had. The financial agent will soon go out into the highways and hedges to raise 75,000 dollars, and it is hoped that he will not return empty handed. When he has raised the amount Mr. Carnegie has promised to add 25,000 dollars more. Success is certain if the friends of the college will but awake to the realization of what it means, not only to Holston Conference, but to the people of the entire territory from which it draws its patronage. Those who are in a position to know say there is no doubt that a better day is drawing for Emory and Henry.

For Better Schools In York County.

Poquoson District, of York county, Va., has never in its history been so aroused, encouraged and united in a great effort to build up good schools as at this time, mainly through the visit of Mr. E. H. Russell, of Fredericksburg, the inspector and examiner of the First District of Virginia, who came to the county through the earnest solicitation of Mr. Samuel Phillips, superintendent of schools of this county.

Mr. Russell came on Monday, March the 12th, addressed the people at Emmans Baptist Church that night. The next day, in company with Mr. Phillips, he visited all the schools of the district and addressed the people at Trinity Methodist Church at night and at Tabernacle Methodist Church the night following. The writer was present at all of these meetings, and was impressed with the fact that Mr. Russell was the right man in the right place. He seemed to be quick in grasping the situation and seeing the needs of the schools and then arousing and uniting the people in trying to establish two graded schools, one near Trinity Church and the other between Tabernacle Church and Poquoson postoffice, with four rooms in each building, and also two primary schools of four grades, one on the extreme lower end of the district and the other at the old Tabernacle School, the latter two for the small children of those two communities.

Though the weather was threatening and part of the time raining, the people showed their interest by coming out and giving the speaker their undivided attention, and when the vote for plans and location was called for, there was only one dissenting vote at either place and the plans meant increased taxation. There has been a good deal of friction existing here between the superintendent, school trustees and the people, mainly about location and the plan of getting the money to build suitable school buildings. All could see something must be done, but they could not agree on any feasible plan to do what was necessary to have good schools. To give an example of some of the startling facts of our situation here, the writer with several friends, counted 179 children of school age in the families of the patrons of Tabernacle School. Now there are two rooms in that building 15 x 15 each. Of course a great many of these children do not go to any school. The parents see that they cannot be seated, and if they could, two teachers can't teach them in such a house. Not one of these 179 children live over one and one-half miles from the school.

I have been greatly pained since becoming a citizen of this community, three years ago, to see what poor opportunities the children of this district have for education.

While our county superintendent and the school trustees have been censured for neglecting the schools, their hands have been tied for the want of money to do the work. But Mr. Russell has showed us, where the trouble was and the way out of it.

I believe with many of my people that his visit will be a lifelong blessing to us. The people seem to be anxious to put the money in the hands of the proper parties, so that this long felt need of the children may be met.

When he shall come this way again it will be hard to find a building large enough to seat the people, so eager will they be to hear him again.

Now, Mr. Editor, you will do us a favor to publish the above.

Yours truly,

D. J. TRAYNHAM,

Pastor of East York Circuit.

THE STATE NORMAL.

Enthusiasm Over Basket-Ball is at High Tide.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, FARMVILLE, VA., March 31.—The enthusiasm over the basket-ball contest has not abated, but rather increased. The teams who met on Saturday morning, March 24th, were the "White," Grace Walton, captain, and the "Green," Steptoe Campbell, captain, with a score of 7 to 1 in favor of the "Green." The "Orange," Wirt Davidson, captain, opposed the "Red," Mattie Thraves, captain, and were defeated by a score of 10 to 2.

The championship contest is now narrowed down to the three teams—the "Green," the "White," and the "Lavender," with Kathleen Baldwin captain of the last.

On Tuesday afternoon, March 27th, the largest crowd of the season cheered the "Green" and the "Lavender," as they played their second match game. Again the "Green" won, after brilliant playing, with a score of 8 to 3.

The interest and the crowds increased to such an extent that the attendance at the next meet, on Wednesday, March 28th, was limited by tickets, an equal number being issued by the opposing teams, the "White" and the "Lavender." The wildest applause encouraged the teams as they faced each other, and was renewed as the first half closed with an even count—2 to 2. The interim of rest for the two teams was filled by the vigorous "rooters" on each side with spirited songs and yells in honor of their favorite team. The second half was also evenly and hotly contested, the record standing 7 to 7 when time was called. The game was continued, with the umpire's announcement that the first side to win three points would be the victors. The spectators almost held their breath as the ball was once more tossed up between the eager centers. Each team made one throw for goal, and then the excited partisans leaned far over the gallery railing, and not an eye lost a movement on the floor below until the "White" made another basket. Such deafening screams cheered the winners that it was some time before quiet was sufficiently restored for the official announcement of the score—11 to 9—in favor of the "Whites."

A large number of the students had the pleasure and privilege of listening to the addresses at the Presbyterian church Tuesday and Wednesday evenings by Rev. William H. Sheppard, D. D., F. R. G. S., a Virginia negro, who has been for fifteen years a missionary in the interior of Africa. Rev. Sheppard is considered by many people the most remarkable negro of the United States, because of his fine education, beautiful, effective speech, modest, unassuming manner, and, above all, because of the wonderful results he has helped to bring about in the Congo region, the heart of darkest Africa. He was sent out by West Hanover Presbytery, and came to Farmville to give to those who had commissioned him a report of the work done under their encouragement and support.

Rev. A. D. P. Gilmore, the assistant of Dr. W. W. Moore, at the Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, conducted the opening exercises of the school on Wednesday morning.

Mr. R. D. Baker, of Big Stone Gap, Superintendent of Education of Wise county, spent several hours at school on Wednesday afternoon, on his way to Richmond.

Dr. and Mrs. John Buchanan, who were for two weeks the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Jarman, left Wednesday to return to their home in Arkansas.

Miss Elizabeth Cochran, who has for a month been confined to a hospital in Richmond, returned to Farmville on Wednesday, much improved in health.

Mrs. James Irvine and Mrs. George Sinclair, of Charlottesville, accompanied by Mrs. S. D. Walton, of Farmville, visited the school on Thursday morning.

Rev. J. H. Davis, Superintendent of Education of Prince Edward county, took part in the opening exercises Thursday morning.

LARGE ENROLLMENT AT WASHINGTON AND LEE

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)

LEXINGTON, VA., March 30.—The annual catalogue of Washington and Lee University, the publication of which was delayed several weeks by a strike in the establishment of the printers, shows a total enrollment of 371 students. Of these 195 are in the academic department, 101 in engineering, and 75 in law. The largest enrollment by States is that of Virginia, with 161. West Virginia comes next, with 45; Maryland, with 23; Kentucky, with 19. The remaining students come from twenty-two different States and Territories. The steady growth of the University is shown by the following figures: The total registration for 1902 was 237; for 1903, 278; for 1904, 305; for 1905, 332; for 1906, 371.

Arrangements have been made by the University for Mr. B. West Clinedinst, of New York, to paint a portrait of General G. W. Custis Lee, president emeritus. Mr. Clinedinst expects to finish the portrait in time for it to be hung in the chapel in June.

ADVANCEMENT MADE IN PITTSYLVANIA SCHOOLS

In this attempt to fulfil in the briefest manner possible a promise to speak as to the "Progress and advancement made in the last few years by schools in the county of Pittsylvania," it is to be hoped that this scribe may not be amenable to the charge of possessing a boasting spirit, or as the Psalmist intimates, occupying "the seat of the scornful." A desire merely to co-operate with others in furthering the great cause of education in the old Commonwealth of blessed memory, in which is felt a profound and abiding interest, induces this allusion to the special field and work of the writer.

Possibly readers may be disappointed in not finding anything either undertaken or accomplished as distinctly new or hitherto unknown in either theory or practice. It may also be further suggested, that no attempt is made in this paper to enumerate all facts and conditions, existing or established, that might be considered evidences of progress.

Pittsylvania has in yearly operation about 250 schools distributed over a territory of perhaps 1,000 or 1,200 square miles, and is situated between the historic waters of the Staunton on the north and the Dan on the south, having the fine old cities of Danville (in her borders) on one side and Lynchburg on the other.

The last school census shows a school population, exclusive of Danville, of nearly 15,000, between the ages of seven and twenty years, of which 10,000 approximately are annually enrolled as public school pupils, requiring an expenditure yearly of $40,000 under present conditions and soon to be largely increased.

To keep the wheels of this complicated machinery well oiled and in active, continuous operation—to give the unceasing attention required for the multitudinous matters of even seemingly minor importance, when otherwise there would be "confusion worse confounded"—to arouse and maintain an ever working enthusiasm, a desirable esprit de corps—to harmonize all warring elements and foster an ambition for further growth and better things, is at least an inspiring task, but certainly not a light diversion or mere recreation. Hence to a reflecting and intelligent mind, there may be some measure of palliation and excuse for failure to realize at once the highest expectations, or by one bound, like the full armed goddess Minerva from the head of Jupiter, reach the summit of hope and advancement along all lines.

Whatever else may be said, one thing is true, that the objects of the public school system have been secured to the full extent of means and resources in hand. Educational facilities and advantages have been brought within reach of all the children, the true beneficiaries, after all, involved in the scheme.

If in any respect conditions exist not declarative of the highest ideals, they have been due to causes common alike to all enterprises in their incipiency and peculiarly applicable to Virginia when public education was inaugurated, scarcely a generation ago, under circumstances the most forlorn and unpromising, with the desolations and impoverishments of withering war on every hand, and financial and other seemingly impossible obstacles to remove.

Coming at once to the point, however, a special feature of school progress to be noted in this county for a few years past exists in the work of establishing graded schools, having to a large extent high school advantages, and trying, with more marked and extensive success than in the past, the consolidation plan, now no longer a theory only. Better buildings, permitting broader instruction, more efficient teaching generally, and other recognized improvements have been the result.

In one district bordering on and uniting with two others a combination was made of five single schools of one teacher each into two commodious buildings, having four rooms in one and three in the other, and with an enrollment of from seventy-five to one hundred pupils in each. One small district in a few years past has generously grown from one graded school into six or seven of a like character, dispensing, it is believed, better instruction in primary as well as in more advanced grades, and in comfortable and not unattractive buildings. In another district a building costing $1,250, with four model rooms, furnished with patent desks, excellent blackboards, large light-bestowing windows, wide hall, and having three teachers now, and four soon to be required, when the enrollment shall be one hundred and fifty or more pupils. The graded school coming up, if possible, to the high school standard, and added thereto, the combination or consolidation idea, have always appealed very strongly to the writer as measures of sound school policy and true roads of educational progress. Hence, efforts have been by him employed notably in that direction, with the strong sympathy, co-operation and able assistance of highly intelligent and representative county and district school boards, with the helpful and potent encouragement of scholarly and progressive teachers and the broad-minded of all classes.

The graded and high school both, so far from weakening the primary grades, and that elementary instruction which constitutes the foundation stones and pillars of all public or private system of education, really, vastly and immeasurably improves it. Such classes of schools, when attaining efficiency, mean necessarily the very best primary schools in connection with and as part and parcel thereof. Let no one be frightened, therefore, by the absurd idea that when one is mentioned the other is neglected.

To use an oft-quoted expression without Latinizing it, "the possession of the one," in such case, "is not the exclusion of the other," but it may be justly and correctly concluded that in every such instance there is union of both to the beauty and strength of each and their enlarged and blended symmetry, like the unsevered roots, trunk and branches of the perfect tree. When the boy or girl plodding through language, literature, science and mathematics is found in such a school, not far off under the same roof, perhaps, can be infallibly located the more youthful primer student, or hopeful delver in the mysteries of good spelling, reading, writing and fraction work, with the incentive ever present to push onward and upward, like the Athenian youth in the Olympia games to the higher goal and acme of noble desire.

No higher model for public school establishment and adoption can be found than the city graded high school. By such school only can educational advantages in town and country be equalized, and the youthful residents of each be placed upon a similar footing.

If the question of distance and geographical hindrances could be overcome, no necessity would exist for the single school, however in the past and now, in fact, filling a most gracious and useful purpose and mission; but every school building would represent a college in miniature plan, arrangement and benefits offered. Continued effort, it is submitted, in that direction, though by no means the only important one, is the key-note, the "Afaddin's lamp," to public-school progress.

Progress must be the watch-word on the educational banner. It is the great principle upon which the university is founded, the law of nature and of nature's God. It is seen in the material as in the spiritual world, written upon every opening bud and blooming flower; is stamped upon the corridors of time and continued through eternity.

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul!
As the swift seasons roll."

F. B. WATSON, SR.

Teacher's Idea of the Single List

The members of our Legislature are, by profession, lawyers, farmers, and occasionally, doctors or business men. What lawyer in that body would like to be confined to one set of law books or commentaries for his information? What farmer would like to be required to use the same seeds year after year, to prepare his soil after the same manner or to use the same fertilizer on the same soil at all times? What doctor would read only one authority on medicine for years in succession?

If these men were required to conform to the same law they wish to make for teachers, the lawyer and doctor would soon be out of date; the farmer's seed would degenerate, and his soil become impoverished; the business man would soon become a bankrupt. Why expect more of teachers than they themselves can accomplish?

The men of our Educational Board, who have committed themselves to the "single list," are representatives of our different institutions of learning. Are they confined to a "single list" to select text-books for their institutions?

The public schools furnish the pupils for these higher institutions of learning. Do these institutions desire broad-minded, developed young men and women, or do they want machinery all cast from the same mould. Why deprive the graded schools of our cities and towns of the use of text-books that would be elephants in the hands of the average country teacher?

The cost of all text-books necessary for a pupil to complete the primary and grammar grades under our present system will not exceed twelve dollars. The average father spends that much in tobacco every year. The man who would complain with this comparison before him is too ignorant to know what is best for his child, and the matter should be decided by wiser heads than his.

But this question has been raised by the politician, whose highest motive is to gain favor with the people; and the people without serious thought have been persuaded that they are being robbed by the publisher and the dealer.

What do our law-makers know about text-books and their suitability to our schools? How strange that those who know the least about such matters should attempt to dictate to those who have the burden to bear! But some one will say that the teacher should have a number of text-books in his library and teach from them. A teacher on a twenty-five dollar salary, six months in the year, own a library!! And would it not be folly to place a book in the hands of pupils for study and then teach them an entirely different method?

Away with such narrow-mindedness, Mr. Legislator! What one of you would have Dr. Kent or Professor Bowles mark out for you to follow a path so narrow that you could not get both feet in it at the same time? Why attempt in Virginia what far more progressive States than she is have found to be a failure?

H. D.

Charlottesville Association.

The Charlottesville Education Association, recently organized, has the following officers:

Hon. J. W. Fishburne, president.
Mrs. C. H. Walker, first vice-president.
Mrs. A. H. Tuttle, second vice-president.
Dr. E. Reinhold Rogers, third vice-president.
Mrs. Bruce R. Payne, secretary.
Capt. Thomas P. Peyton, treasurer.